

Tavern Talk

Fall 2007, Volume 2, Issue 2

You've walked the walk, now you can talk the talk.



Walker Barn Gets New Roof

There was a “can do” attitude and feeling of community at Walker Tavern last summer when volunteers replaced the roof on the 19th century-style barn. Just like neighbors at a settlement era barn-raising, people came together to accomplish something that couldn't be done without help.

The Michigan Volunteers, a group of men and women who restore historical buildings in National Parks and Forests around the country and as far away as South Africa, came to Walker during the hottest, rainiest week of the summer. They climbed upon the roof between thunderstorms to replace the old cedar shakes with new ones. Friends of Walker Tavern worked side by side with the Michigan Volunteers on the roof and also provided

meals for the volunteers. Boy Scouts from the Chief Lenape Trails Great Sauk Trail Council helped clean up and started prepping the tavern for painting next spring.



Barn Exhibits

The barn at Walker Tavern is a New England style basement barn with a fieldstone foundation. It was built using 19th century tools and methods. Timbers are joined by long hardwood pegs called “tree nails” or trunnels. This traditional way of joining timbers in post and beam construction started before the American Revolution in response to a British tax on metal hardware and nails.

Traditionally, the barn housed cattle and horses as well as grain and hay for feeding them. The barn at Walker today contains vehicles important to early travel in Michigan including a buckboard, a covered wagon, and a model of a Concord Stagecoach.

Exhibits in the barn show how 19th century barns and roads were built. Hands-on activities encourage visitors to learn about the principals behind simple machines. Visitors can climb aboard the stagecoach and imagine what it would have been like to travel all day by stage over rutted, dusty roads. Or they can imagine packing all their belongings into a covered wagon.



photo by L. Purtzenski

Calling All Cranks!

In the early days of baseball, fans were called “cranks”, the pitcher was known as the “hurler”, and a ground ball was a “daisy cutter”. The rules of 19th century baseball included no spitting, cussing, or sliding. Soon you will be able to experience baseball as it was played in the Civil War era. Walker Tavern is forming its own Vintage Baseball Team. Brian Thomas, who has played for the past three years on the Hartwick Pines vintage club, *The Swampers*, is organizing the Walker Tavern team. According to Brian, *Vintage baseball is a Gentleman's Game and is played by the rules of the period of the 1860s. There is lots of interaction with the fans, and often the audience is invited to participate in the fun.*

Walker Tavern is looking for players as well as fans. Anyone over the age of 18 who is interested in playing for the Walker team, is invited to contact us. Starting next spring the Walker Club will play other vintage baseball teams from around Michigan and northern Ohio. Walker Tavern Historic Site will host home games. For more information, please contact Brian Thomas at 734-428-8087 or by e-mail at bthomas_bt@yahoo.com or call Walker Tavern at 517-467-4401.

Name the Team...

Walker Tavern's new vintage baseball team wants your help in naming the team. *We're looking for a name that people will associate with Walker Tavern*, says Cheryl Valentine, Walker Site Historian, *a name that relates to our mission of interpreting the history of travel in the Irish Hills*. Some of the names under consideration are: the Travelers, Wagoners, Highwaymen, Vagabonds, Waysiders, Crossroaders, and the Coachmen. Reinsman and Whip were names for stagecoach drivers, a bull-whacker was the driver of a freight wagon, and a road agent was a stagecoach robber.

If you like any of these names, or have another name suggestion, please share your thoughts with us. Call Cheryl at 517-467-4401 or e-mail at valentinec@michigan.gov to vote for your choice. The chosen name and the 2008 schedule will be printed in our Spring 2008 issue of *Tavern Talk*.



Eagle Scouts at Walker



Three scouts completed the requirements to become Eagle Scouts at Walker Tavern Historic Site this year. New information kiosks, a landscaped parking area, and improved picnic facilities now greet visitors to Walker Tavern thanks to the hard work, leadership, and vision of these young men.

Tim Cencer of Boy Scout Troop 632 from Tecumseh installed three new picnic tables and four charcoal grills in the tree-lined picnic area north of the visitor center. John Hoag, also of Troop 632, planted maple and oak trees to shade the Farmers Market and parking areas. Caleb Scholl, of troop 649 in Adrian, provided information kiosks at the entrance gate and at the beginning of the Frank Bolak Heritage Walkway.

Congratulations and our heartfelt thanks to the scouts who chose Walker Tavern for their Eagle projects, and thanks to all the crew members who participated and to the community members who supported these projects.



Programs Prove Popular at Walker

Is your school, club, church group or family looking for a unique experience? Would you like to have fun while learning about early travel in Michigan? If so, check out the educational programs and tours offered at Walker Tavern.

Last season, Walker hosted Boy Scout and Girl Scout Day camps, school field trips, lifelong learners, homeschoolers and bus tours, as well as a series of programs designed for children and adults to enjoy together. Topics ranged from the history of birding to Civil War reenacting and from historic foodways to preserving family memories. Whether participants learned to harness a horse or to tin-punch an artifact to take home, the focus was on hands-on history.

Programs and tours can be designed for the specific interests of groups of six people or more and for any age or mixture of ages. Call Cheryl Valentine at 517-467-4401 for more information and program fees. Group tours and programs are available May - October.



Farmers Market Rides the Wave of Agritourism Boom



With folks being more conscious of where their food is grown and wanting to buy from local farmers and producers, the Sunday Farmer's Market at Walker Tavern has proven to be a popular attraction for travelers and residents of the Irish Hills alike.

Visitors to the farmers market are greeted with the aroma of fresh donuts and just-baked bread mingled with the smell of cedar

and pine trees. Shoppers discover vendors selling everything from fresh fruits, vegetables, and plants to Native American crafts and collectables. Sometimes crafters demonstrate "lost arts" and musicians form an impromptu jam session. The Market has the feeling of a village square about it. People enjoy getting to know each other and talking with the growers and producers. It is reminiscent of a slower time at Cambridge Junction when the Walker Site was farmland and people arrived in carts, wagons, and on foot to exchange goods and services.

David Brainerd, organizer of the Walker Farmers' Market, says the market attracted an average of 300 people each Sunday. All fifteen vendors who participated were really pleased with the start up season and all plan to return next year. New vendors are welcome and anyone interested in reserving a space for next season may contact David at Brainerd Orchards 517-467-7793.

Friends of Walker Tavern

Please consider joining the Friends of Walker Tavern Historic Site. With a \$40 membership you'll receive an annual subscription to *Michigan History Magazine*, a discount at Walker Mercantile and other museum stores, and the knowledge that you are supporting the preservation of Michigan's rich cultural heritage.

Membership dues from the Friends of Walker Tavern contribute to educational programs and site improvements at Walker Tavern.

For a one year membership, make a check for \$40 payable to Michigan Historical Center Foundation and send to:

Walker Tavern Historic Site
13220 M-50
Brooklyn, MI 49230



Walker Tavern Historic Site

From stagecoaches to automobiles Walker Tavern stands at the crossroads of travel history. This wayside inn was a busy stagecoach stop on the main road from Detroit to Chicago in the 1840s. In the 1920s, Walker was a popular roadside attraction for early motorists. Today it is a state historical park and part of the Michigan Historical Museum System. It is operated jointly by the Department of History, Arts and Libraries and by the Department of Natural Resources.

Many people important to Michigan history have passed through this intersection where the old Chicago Road meets the Monroe Pike. Native Americans, explorers, road builders, settlers, land speculators, politicians, preachers, runaway slaves, bootleggers, bandits, and flappers are among the colorful array of travelers who have passed by this spot. They came on foot, by wagon, on horseback and by automobile.

Visit Walker Tavern Historic Site at the intersection of US 12 and M-50 and "experience" travel then and now. Climb aboard a model stagecoach and imagine riding by stage twelve hours a day over rutted and dusty roads. Enter the tavern where weary travelers rested from their journey. Enjoy first-hand accounts of 19th century travelers. Hear folklore about celebrity visits and murdered strangers.

Picnic, hike and relax at Walker Tavern where history hits the road.

Tavern Talk is a publication of Walker Tavern Historic Site. Editor, Cheryl Valentine. Assistant Editor, Ni Gordon.

Recipe Corner

The volunteer crew who replaced the barn roof last summer feasted on home-cooked meals provided by the Friends of Walker Tavern. They proclaimed the Walker Tavern fare, *The best eating we've had anywhere in the country.* I'll bet they would agree with David Palmer, an early settler of the Irish Hills, who wrote home to his parents in New York in 1836, *"I must say that their tables (in Michigan Territory) are as well furnished and I think better than they were in any part of New York that I have traveled in... My appetite is like a saw mill!!!!"*

Here's a crowd-pleasing recipe from Walker Tavern volunteer coordinator, Dilla Miller.



Lasagne:

8 oz lasagne noodles	1 tsp salt
1/2 lb ground beef	1/2 tsp oregano
1/4 cup chopped onion	1/4 tsp pepper
6 oz can tomato paste	1 1/2 cups water
8oz can tomato sauce	2 cups creamed cottage cheese
1 can mushrooms pieces and stems, drained	1 cup chopped raw spinach
2 clove garlic, crushed	1 egg
1 tsp crushed sweet basil	1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
1 tsp parsley flakes	sliced pepperoni

Cook lasagne noodles as directed on package. Brown beef with onion in skillet. Add tomato paste and sauce, mushrooms, garlic, sweet basil, parsley flakes, 1/2 tsp salt, oregano, pepper, and water. Simmer 1 hour. Combine cottage cheese, spinach, egg, 1/2 tsp salt, and 1/8 tsp pepper. In a 12x8 inch baking dish, alternate layers of 2 thicknesses of noodles, cottage cheese mixture, meat mixture, mozzarella cheese and pepperoni (1 usually use about 24 slices per layer) ending with mozzarella cheese. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese just before baking, if desired.

Bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and let stand 15 minutes before serving.

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